



Flight for the Fight | Alaska Getaway Update

Flight for the FIGHT

60 Hours of ATC: April 8, starting at 11am ET | \$1 donated for every flight!



Boston Center (ZBW_C) will be controlled non-stop from 11am ET on Friday, April 8 until 11pm ET on Sunday, April 10. Pilots generate \$1 for each flight during this time which goes to fund Breast Cancer research and BVA. Make a meaningful difference in someone's life while doing what we love: flying and controlling at Boston Virtual ATC!

From April 8-10, BVA is doing something that no other FSX community has dared attempt before: 60 hours of continuous Boston Center! Any time you want to fly, day or night, you'll find ATC online throughout the weekend. 3am? 4:30pm? No problem, ZBW_C will be there. We'll also have other controllers online throughout the event (check the Flight for the Fight page for details).

Better yet, each and every flight completed by pilots adds \$1 to a running total; at the end of the 60 hour event, we'll total up the flights and donate half of the total to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure (the other half will benefit [BVA's 2011 Campaign](#)) up to a maximum of \$1,500. This is a great opportunity for us to control, you to fly, and the community together to generate some money for a great cause.

Literally all you need to do is come out and fly, anytime between 11:00am ET on April 8 and 11:00pm ET on April 10. Any flight plan filed that enters, departs, or remains inside the ZBW ARTCC will count toward our total. There is a bonus of \$0.10 for each time you switch to a new frequency (so the more controllers you talk to, the more money your flight will generate).

In support of the event, we have created repaints for the default Boeing 737-800 and for the payware Level-D 767-300. You can download both of these repaints from the [Flight for the Fight page of our website](#). You are not required to use or download the repaint, but if you choose to do so, the call sign is "Hope" and the identifier is WOH (WOH224 = "Hope 224").

Fly anytime you want to, day or night, and have at least a Boston Center controller online for 60 hours this April. You can be a part of this opportunity to make FSX history and help in the fight against Breast Cancer. All you need to do is show up and fly!

The Alaska Getaway continues until Sunday! Join us up in the great wide north for some tricky mountain flying and rapidly-changing weather. To celebrate the Getaway, we'll be featuring PANC & PADQ in this week's Regional Circuit event (on Tuesday at 8pm ET).

While flying in Alaska, keep in mind that Anchorage Center covers the entire state, even airports along the Aleutian island chain. It's a large airspace: you can fly for more than 1,000 miles and still be within Anchorage Center's coverage.

Our featured airports all provide interesting challenges and scenic approaches, but you may also consider visiting Juneau (PAJN), King Salmon (PAKN), Homer (PAHO), or Kenai (PAEN). We look forward to seeing you in the skies over Alaska tomorrow! Remember to have those departure plates handy for the tricky climbout procedures in mountainous terrain.

Cape Air Virtual >>



Pilot of the Month

Each month, Cape Air Virtual recognizes the pilot who has the most hours for the airline. For March, that pilot is Jimmy ('touchandgo1957'), who has flown a total of 80.5 hours. Congratulations Jimmy!



Regional Circuit



Tuesday, April 5
(8-11pm ET)

KORF (Norfolk) &
KDCA (Washington)

Our controllers fully staff two airports and provide complete ATC coverage for flights between the two; pilots are encouraged to file preferred routes and can expect multiple handoffs and busy frequencies throughout the event

Domestic Journey



Monday, May 16
(8-11pm ET)

KICT (Wichita) &
KSTL (St. Louis)

The Domestic Journey provides BVA pilots with the opportunity to enjoy medium-haul flights across North America with air traffic control coverage from gate-to-gate.

Pack the Pattern



Wednesday, April 20
(8-10pm ET)

KIAH (Houston)

Pilots are encouraged to fly into the event or fly IFR or VFR circuits of a busy Class Bravo airport, with full ATC coverage for the entire evening (including Clearance, Ground, multiple Tower and Approach controllers, and maybe even a Center!)

Fly-In



Sunday, May 8
(2-5pm ET)

Cape Cod

Tower (Local) Controllers will feature several small airports designed for General Aviation aircraft. Fly IFR or VFR within controlled airspace; general aviation aircraft (anything from a Cessna to a LearJet) are preferred.

European Tour



Saturday, July 9
(2-5pm ET)

EGPF (Glasgow) &
EGCC (Manchester)

The HTC aims to create the most intense experience for pilots by squeezing eleven controllers into a small airspace, encouraging pilots to sign-up for a departure slot, and keeping blood pressure as high as possible for as long as possible.

Getaway



March 18 - April 3

Alaska
(PANC, PAFA, PAVD, PADQ)

BVA's Getaway Event takes pilots and controllers for a change of scenery, and features various airports across North America. Join BVA as we 'Getaway' to explore new airports and destinations

Pilot Tip of the Month

Slow Down!

The most critical part of a flight with Air Traffic Control is the last twenty minutes. From the time ATC vectors you off your route to the time you intercept the localizer, several critical instructions relating to heading, altitude, and often speed are given. If you miss one of these instructions, you run the risk of missing your final approach course and being forced to go around. During this critical phase, you are also often vectored into a sequence for a particular runway. As you are turned to intercept the localizer, it is crucial that your speed is not too great: trying to intercept a localizer at 250 knots (or faster) isn't likely to work. For most jet aircraft, we suggest slowing down to 230 knots within 30 miles of your arrival airport, and 190-210 knots as you are turned to intercept the localizer. Of course, if ATC gives you specific speed instructions—even if they are faster—you should always comply with those instructions. In the absence of specific speed restrictions, 190 knots is a good speed for jet and turboprop aircraft to intercept the localizer.



The Wild Wild West

For the last 2 weeks Mother had rotated a bunch of our pilots to Alaska. We all were pretty psyched to be there actually since we all had been watching that new Discovery Channel show Flying Wild Alaska. We were looking forward to trying some of those 40 knot crosswind landings for ourselves. Dispatch us running flights to all corners of this last bastion of wild flying, and I was looking forward to seeing what I could do with an RJ here. Sideslipping an E135 into Unakaleet? Sign me up. But alas, from day one of our arrival we had nothing but clear blue sky, moderate winds, and smooth sailing.

Even with clear skies it was obvious that this was a challenge of a new sort. We were truly operating in the Wild Wild West. Things were different, risks were greater, distances were vast. Sure the Victor airway charts show distance, but you really don't get a sense for how far apart the destinations are until you fly them. And on my first real Alaskan run from Unakaleet to Fairbanks I was unprepared for how long I would.... just..... be.... well, flying. This turned out to be Industrial Strength Flying with a capital "I". Even while booking along in our sleek little E135 at 300 knots it took almost 2 hours to get even just halfway across the state.

It also struck me how alone you are in the Wild Wild West. It was spooky in its vast empty spaces and the number of new things you had to figure out by yourself. Nearly every airport we departed from and arrived at was uncontrolled. Many times we would check in with center while still on the ground, receive a timetable for IFR cancellation, depart on UNICOM, and then contact center airborne only to talk to them maybe twice more. As it turns out, the Wild Wild West can also be lonely. Many an hour was spent re-reading the E135 operating manual in the purple light of the midnight sun, and without hearing the voice of a company ship for literally days.

Alaska's "moments of stark terror" are also of a different variety than we find at Boston. One fine night Skyvector went down just before we were scheduled to take a planeload down to Aniak (PANI). Skyvector almost never goes down, but when it does it's functionally catastrophic, and it was definitely a form of stark terror. Since this wasn't our normal airspace our chart binder was useless, and suddenly I had none of the information I would normally rely on to fly. No VOR frequencies, no victor airway data, no DME's, nada. We were essentially blind, dead in the water, and falling further behind schedule by the second.

The droid was no help either. I Googled just about every combination of "aviation chart" I could think of but nothing worked out. Skyvector is – apparently - the only free charting service on the internet providing anywhere near enough detail to be useful.

But after 45 minutes of frustration, and just before busting out the credit card to buy an FAA chart, I remembered that the ERJ has some rudimentary mapping functions built into its brain. Some button pushing, a little pencil work, and we have a bona-fide

Wild Wild West flight plan sporting pilotage, NDB beacons, and just plain flying "that-a-way". We'll have to limp along at 16,500 though as penance, since flying "that-a-way" doesn't qualify you for IFR altitudes. In the Wild Wild West we improvise.

ANC center checks us out, departure is on Unicom, we point vaguely south and wait. Normally nav instruments would light up at 1000 feet, but today there is no signal from anything I can recognize. No signal at all. Out of instinct I reach over and start the chronometer. For a United Regional pilot to be out of contact with anything resembling a radio fix for longer than even a few minutes is really unnerving. Then comes the creeping doubt. Are the instruments working? Did I plan this flight correctly? Am I GIGO?



One minute ticks by and no signal. Two minutes and still nothing. Three minutes and I'm really starting to squirm. I stop looking at the chronometer and force myself to think of something else and I feel like I'm waiting for a watched kettle to boil. Captain Andrew had a class on FMC use not too long ago, and I'm now wishing I paid a bit more attention in class.

Soon enough though the NDB lights up a section of the ERJ dashboard I've never seen lit up before. The chronometer reads just past 4 minutes and we are spot on course. Jeez. All that worrying and fuss for just 4 minutes. A few flips of a switch and we superimpose mapping and weather on the MFD, and I'm smiling and having delusions of being a G550 pilot. We are fat, hopefully not dumb, but yes, happy.

Landing is on Unicom, arrival is at pilots discretion and features a beautiful uncontrolled teardrop at scorching speeds out and back from the airport NDB. In the Wild Wild West sometimes you can bend the rules just a little. We're shortly on the ramp at PANI with nothing but frozen tundra, icy rivers, snow capped mountains, and zero degree air that makes your throat clench up when you breathe it in. Not a single other aircraft is parked with us, not a single person is working on the tarmac. There's barely a sound anywhere except for the whine of the APU and a background low level howling of wind from somewhere. And I'm feeling like I've just landed the Millennium Falcon on Hoth. It feels good.

Later that week we're on a hop from PAOT to PAFA. ANC center is on com 1 and we're monitoring PAFA tower on com 2. Center is quiet, but PAFA tower is active and conditions are deteriorating. And just like listening to the Nittany Lions fight their way down the



field, I'm glued to the action on the radio. It's not a storm per se, just a building squall. But is there ever just a building squall in the Wild Wild West?

Another inbounder is asking for runway conditions. Tower indicates a DC10 arriving earlier reported light snow, freezing mist, and RVR at five thousand. As if on cue the outer edges of the soup closes in on us as we slip between the layers at cruise. Visibility is decreasing and darkness is approaching.

A few minutes pass and another inbounder checks in with tower. It's a turboprop, callsign PA28. The pilot is requesting that the runway lights be brightened one notch brighter and it sounds like she's a regular around here. PA28 makes it in safely and I'm just riveted to the radio like listening to the game. We still have 150 miles still to fly in deteriorating conditions, and who knows what we will find when we get there.

Half an hour passes and tower crackles another update to an inbounder. Conditions at Fairbanks have deteriorated to ½ mile visibility, sky obscured, snow and freezing fog, winds calm. What? No 40 knot crosswind? Common.... Surely you've got more than that you can throw at us. As we slip into the clouds everything goes dark at 1200 feet and I can see why PA28 requested the lights up a notch. Betty is showing the way as we pierce through the final bit of chop just above ground. The runway comes up and the icing indicator chimes just as the wheels screech onto runway two zero. As we taxi up to the gate I see the DC10 freighter from earlier still turning around their cargo. Nice.

On our last night in the Wild Wild West we are departing out of PANI again. Late March is turning into early April and there are signs of spring peeking out everywhere. Since our last visit here the snow has melted and everywhere beyond the tarmac there are little green sprouts of grass and shrub. But it's time for departure, and across the tarmac is the whine of another CRJ's APU as they also take on PAX. I want to get out before they do.

I've enjoyed learning about and flying in the Wild Wild West, but I'm also ready to return to the skies of home. Later tonight we'll be starting our hops back to Boston by way of KSEA and KMSP. Dispatch shows that a number of other United Regional pilots are also rotating home tonight as well. Good news. We'll have friends and company traffic for the 3 hour redeye to KSEA.

As we head into the night air again I see that it's clear sailing all the way. Bummer. Kindof. As much as I try to hit interesting weather with a jet captains schedule it's apparently much harder than it looks. I can also say that the Air Alaska show on Discovery – while definitely cool – also compacts the “moments of stark terror” parts of flying into a made for TV one hour segment. We seem to have been left with all the “hours of sheer boredom part”. Not complaining though. Anytime you need someone to strap an E135 to their butt and carry 40 loved ones into the stratosphere call me up. I'm your guy.

Departure is on Unicom again, and checking in with center crossing 5,000 finds the coms are ablaze. Cool! Company Traffic! There are UALR flights from all ends of the Wild Wild West giving center some action. I hear Mark in UAL373 coming down on a

long bomb from up north. There's Javiero in UAL221, Ian in UAL074, Jim in UAL007, Braines in UAL1106, and even a new hire operating UAL693. Pilots are furiously sending chats, catching up, and the onboard texting system is going nuts. It turns out that pretty much no one hit any interesting weather while they were here, and one pilot even pines for the snowy muck over KACK. Another pulls WX for KACK on his iphone and indicates that yes, in fact, it is slushy snow at KBOS right now. We all agree that it truly is a sickness.

Arrival is a piece of cake. We're number 3 following company aircraft with 2 more right behind. As soon as they are cleared off ground the company com channel erupts with more chatter. Everyone is obviously excited that there will be more than one company jet parked at the tarmac tonight, and that we'll all be rotating back home this weekend. Most departures are for KSEA, but then in the morning some will depart for Minneapolis, some for Denver, some for Kansas City, and one even for Chicago, but all then all arriving on Sunday night at KBOS.

Soon we'll see the stars of home. We've been flying here for weeks and everyone is a little slap happy tonight. Pilots are smack talking and hazing each other over COCOM. UAL1106 confesses he triangulated ROCES and missed it by 6 miles and takes a bit of grief for it. “Well at least he was actually trying to hit ROCES unlike all you other slackers” someone remarks. Ribs and jabs are flying about, and cameras are coming out as pilots share in the company and snap photos of operations. These guys are awesome and my sides hurt from laughing and snorking as we prep for a bag drag. These are the hard core pilots of United Regional, and while many pilots come and go, this is part of the group that has been there from the beginning. They're sharp, they fly like crazy, and I must say they're fun a party.

But their pilot humor is often dry and inside. As one new aircraft pulls up to the ramp he calls out in jest “Hey where am I supposed to park this thing again?”. Another UALR pilot answers back “put it next to me” he says. “I want to take a picture of it.”

The pause was only 2 seconds before someone has to say it. A voice on COCOM squawks then obvious response.

“That's what SHE said, hehheh.” I guess in the Wild Wild West we're not always politically correct either.

United Regional blurs the lines of reality and expands friendships daily. For more information on flying with us please visit our page on BVA at www.unitedregional.bostonvirtualatc.com



BVA 2011 Campaign

BVA needs your help! Thanks to the generosity of our members, we have been able to raise just over \$1000 in March. We are half-way to meeting our 2011 Campaign financial goal, but we still need \$1000 in order to ensure BVA's financial stability this year. We have roughly 500 members active on a daily basis. If each member donated \$5 per year, we would break even in 2011. Would you please consider donating at least \$5 in 2011? Would you consider donating \$10 or \$20 so we have a financial buffer in case we have an unexpected disaster like we had last year? Think of it this way: if every time you talk to a controller you gave 10 cents to BVA you would end up donating more than what we're asking. So can you help us with \$5, \$10 or \$20? You can send us cash, a check or money order, or preferably a donation through PayPal. Paypal's commissions are worth the service they provide but if you don't have a PayPal account you can make your check to Microvisual and mail it to:

Microvisual
PO Box 370831
Montara, CA 94037

Consider how important the time you spend on BVA is...and then decide whether you think it's right for you to contribute.

Flight for the FIGHT

60 Hours of ATC:
April 8-10, starting at 11am ET

Susan G. Komen
FOR THE cure

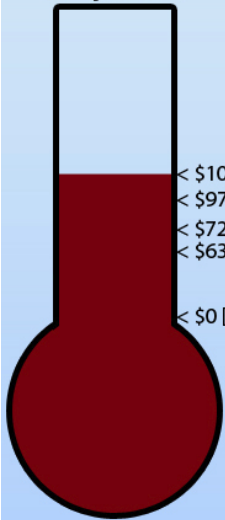
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[Click Here for Details](#)

Please Donate to BVA's 2011 Campaign

We need just under \$2,000 to make it through this year.

\$2,000



< \$1035 [Mar. 27]
< \$975 [Mar. 20]
< \$720 [March 13]
< \$630 [March 9]
< \$0 [March 5]

BVA would like to thank those members who donated \$50 or more over the past two years (as of March 4/11):

BVA ID	'09	'10	'11
airtangofive	62	52	0
Chuck Wareham	50	200	220
gochase85	0	150	0
KAP501	100	50	0
Kyle Hoege	70	0	0
Pierre (Pierul)	900	0	0
Powerband FSX	0	150	100
Rogerwilco	50	50	0
Ryan Brand	0	100	0
Simon Schneider	50	0	0
USMCATC21	150	50	0
Anonymous Mbrs.	2830	783	50

You can donate any amount, large or small, in one of three ways:

- 1 > Use the "Donate" button to the left.
- 2 > Send money through PayPal to bills@microvisual.com
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SUCCEED...

...skydiving is not for you.

